

1. Get organized

- Immediately put out food, water, dirty laundry, and your dog's bed on your porch.
- Assign one person to be the point person for communications and coordination. Determine what phone number and email address to use in advertisements and on social media.
- Organize all current information about your lost dog (name, current picture, breed, description, microchip information, vet record, etc.)

2. Create flyers and posters

- Go to FreeTexasFlyer.com to have your missing dog posted on Lost Dogs of Texas FaceBook page and PetFBI.org. You also get a flyer to print. (An economical option is to use black and white.)
- [Create posters](#) to put in stores, in your yard, etc. Attach to neon colored paper as a background.

3. Get the Word Out!

- If your dog is microchipped, put priority on getting flyers to nearby vet offices and places with scanners first, before the person who finds your dog does.
- Get a map of the area, divide the map into sections at least 3 miles in every direction from where the dog was lost. Highlight and assign each section to a volunteer to distribute flyers and hang posters.
- Walk and drive the map areas, distributing flyers and hanging posters. Hang posters at intersections. Give flyers to delivery drivers (mail, UPS, FedEx, etc.), food delivery services, cab companies, bus drivers, neighbors and local businesses. Go door to door in your neighborhood. It is important to talk with people. You may want to keep a record of which neighbors you speak with, so you can come back and check with neighbors you missed.
- Look for "Found" signs.
- Remind your team [not to shout and chase your dog](#) if they see her. This may make your dog feel threatened and panic which could cause them to run even further, possibly into traffic. Anyone who sees your dog, even you, should quietly sit or lie down, avert their eyes and lure the dog with tasty treats.
- Post a sign in your front yard
- Attach a poster to your car or use window markers to write on your windows.
- Check your posters often and replace them if they are removed or unreadable

4. Notify

- Submit a lost dog report to your local animal control and visit in person and visit often.
- Call your microchip company to report your lost dog and to make sure your chip information is correct. ([microchip company lookup](#))
- Notify local police departments
- Contact your veterinarian and other veterinarians in the area.
- Alert your Homeowners Association
- Contact animal service businesses in the area – retail stores, trainers, pet sitters, kennels, etc.
- Notify your city government. Find out who picks up deceased animals and contact them. This might be the highway or public works department.

5. Visit Shelters

IMPORTANT: In Texas, most shelters have a required stray hold of 72 hours. After 72 hours, your dog belongs to the county and will either be put to death or put up for adoption. **You must go visit at least every other day.**

Visit all county shelters in your county and in nearby counties if you live near a county border. Ask to see all dogs there, even dogs in medical areas or the adoption area.

Visit local rescues such as Humane Societies.

Post flyers in each location and check back often to make sure the flyer is still posted. Also check posted "found" flyers. Try to talk to staff and give them flyers. Be polite and make people aware.

6. Social Media and Websites

Post your lost dog on [Craigslist](#) in both the Community/Pets and Community/Lost & Found sections, in your area and nearby areas. Monitor craigslist for found dog ads and for "dog for sale" ads. Use the PetFBI flyer. If you see your dog for sale, make a copy of the ad. When you call, DO NOT say it is your dog. Say you want to buy the dog and do not ask questions about the dog. Arrange to meet somewhere safe in public. Go with the police if possible.

Post on [NextDoor.com](#)

Post on local Facebook pages/groups (Lost & Found Animals, HOAs, Sell/Swap pages, etc.) Use the link we send you for your flyer.

Post and check ads in local newspapers. Remember not everyone is online!

7. Check Sightings

Use a separate map to record sightings of the dog. Record the date, time and exact location of each sighting.

If you have had multiple sightings in the same area, put out items that smell familiar to your dog in that area. You can also add a feeding station and a trail camera in the area to verify a sighting.

Avoid bringing in large groups to areas where there have been sightings as they may scare a lost dog and cause him/her to leave the area.

Humane traps can be used to trap a dog but make sure you have the appropriate size. You must get help from an experienced trapper. Reach out to your local Animal Control or a local rescue. A dog can be killed, injured, or made impossible to trap, if trapped incorrectly.

If there have been no sightings, start from the beginning and expand your search area. Some dogs tend to go farther, faster--Border Collies, Huskies, Boxers, and Schnauzers among other breeds.

8. Once Your Dog is Home

Take your dog to a veterinarian to be checked over.

Remove all flyers and posters. Take down web postings and discontinue ads. Let all agencies you contacted know the dog has been recovered and thank them for their assistance.

If not already, make sure your dog is micro chipped and wearing tags on a secure collar or harness.

Update the status of your dog on the [PetFBI](#) website by changing to "Back Home."

Thanks to [Lost Dogs Illinois](#) and [Lost Dogs Arizona](#) for allowing us to use their check lists as a model.